

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-14 (cancelled)

15. (currently amended) A replicating device adapted to be used in association with a replicating pad having a plurality of pins extending downwardly and ~~a substrate a~~ compliant agar plate, the replicating device comprising:

a gripper adapted to grip the replicating pad;

a pad locating device so configured as to align the replicating pad in the gripper;

a positioning device so configured as to lift, lower and move the gripper to a predetermined location; and

a pusher so configured as to push the replicating pad downwardly whereby the pins of the replicating pad are in engagement with the compliant agar plate and whereby the replicating pad is pushed downwardly once it has been positioned in the predetermined location on the agar plate and is in contact with the substrate.

16. (previously presented) A replicating device as claimed in claim 15 wherein the pusher includes an actuator and a pressure regulator.

17. (cancelled)

18. (previously presented) A replicating device as claimed in claim 16 wherein the pad locating device has a plurality of projections extending upwardly therefrom.

19. (original) A replicating device as claimed in claim 18 wherein the projections include conical pins and blocks.

20. (original) A replicating device as claimed in claim 19 further including a pad container adapted to hold a plurality of replicating pads.

21. (original) A replicating device as claimed in claim 15 wherein the gripper includes a vacuum to hold the replicating pad to the gripper.

22-26 (cancelled)

27. (new) A replicating device as claimed in claim 15 wherein the replicating pad is a disposable replicating pad.